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THE  
PLEDGES OF HIS LOVE

*Thoughts on the Holy Communion*



H. C. O. MOULE, B.D.

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THE PLEDGES OF HIS LOVE



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# THE PLEDGES OF HIS LOVE

THOUGHTS ON THE HOLY COMMUNION  
DEVOTIONAL AND EXPLANATORY

Eucharist

BY

THE REV. H. C. G. MOULE, B.D.

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of Trinity College, Cambridge*

‘We did eat and drink with Him.’—ACTS X. 41

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## *P R E F A C E*

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THIS little book touches an inexhaustible subject, and of course only touches it. The more the Holy Supper is pondered, the more wonderful it is to thought. The more it is rightly used, the more manifold and precious are its blessings to the believing Christian.

The writer's motive has been two-fold. He cannot but think that the true use of the Holy Communion is often beset, and more or less obstructed, by one or

the other of two tendencies. The one is towards a mysticism which goes to obscure, though with a golden haze, some of the majestic primary truths of the Ordinance, and of the Spiritual Life at large. The other is towards a shallowness or almost carelessness of view, which sees little, if anything, of the divine specialities of a Sacrament. He has sought, accordingly, to explain and to appeal, in view of Scriptural simplicity and Scriptural distinctiveness. And he has had all along in his mind the needs of the innumerable hearts which hunger and thirst to find full joy and power not only in the Lord's Ordinance, but in the Lord Himself, 'at all times and in all places.'

Here and there the reader will find passages where differing views of this or that aspect of the holy Rite are discussed. It seemed inevitable to make some reference, however brief, to such problems. Most of these passages have been placed apart, in an appendix; but some appear in the midst of a generally devotional context. In all such discussions the writer has earnestly sought to 'set the Lord before him,' and to think and speak, not as for an opinion, but humbly and in love, as for what he reverently holds as divine truth. If it has been otherwise in any case, he desires only to know it and to repent.

With earnest desires and prayers, this little book is offered, in all

humility, to the Church. Whatever in it is capable of blessing, may the Heavenly Master bless to the use of His people, to the strengthening of their faith, and the growth of their love of His Ordinance and of Himself.

RIDLEY HALL, CAMBRIDGE,  
*March, 1894.*

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\* \* In a small manual (published 1892),  
*At the Holy Communion*, many of the topics of this book are treated, sometimes on similar lines. But the purpose of that work more than of this is to assist the young Communicant in direct preparation, and in Communion itself. The present chapters aim rather at a simple examination of the sacred subject of the holy Ordinance in general.

# CONTENTS

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	PAGE
I.—THE SACRAMENT: WHAT IT SAYS TO US . . . . .	I
II.—THE SACRAMENT: WHAT WE SAY IN IT (1) . . . . .	14
III.—THE SACRAMENT: WHAT WE SAY IN IT (2) . . . . .	22
IV.—PREPARATION . . . . .	32
V.—THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST . . . . .	44
VI.—FEEDING ON CHRIST . . . . .	59
VII.—FEEDING ON CHRIST IN THE HOLY COMMUNION . . . . .	68
VIII.—THE COVENANT AND THE CUP . . . . .	79
IX.—OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING . . . . .	97
HYMNS . . . . .	108

*APPENDIX*

	PAGE
(a) THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN . . . . .	113
(b) 'OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING' .	124
(c) NOTES ON SOME WORDS AND PHRASES . . . . .	133

## ‘TILL HE COME.

By Christ redeem'd, in Christ restored,  
We keep the memory adored  
And shew the death of our dear Lord  
Until He come.

His Body, broken in our stead,  
Is shewn in this memorial bread,  
And so our feeble love is fed  
Until He come.

The drops of His dread agony,  
His life-blood shed for us, we see ;  
The wine shall tell the mystery  
Until He come.

And thus that dark betrayal night  
With the last advent we unite,  
By one blest chain of loving rite  
Until He come ;

Until the trump of God be heard,  
Until the ancient graves be stirr'd,  
And, with the great commanding word,  
The Lord shall come.

Oh blessed hope ! with this elate,  
Let not our hearts be desolate,  
But, strong in faith, in patience wait,  
    Until He come.

G. RAWSON.



# THE PLEDGES OF HIS LOVE

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## CHAPTER I

*Lk 22:19-20*

THE SACRAMENT: WHAT IT SAYS TO US

LET us come to the Table of the Lord in thought, that we may with more profit come to it in act. And let us first, and all along, draw very near to the ever-present LORD of the Table.

LORD JESUS CHRIST, Son of God and Son of Man, Lamb of the Sacrifice, true Passover, Resurrection and Life, Bread of Heaven, Priest and King of Thy

people, we are at Thy feet. Teach us by Thy Spirit, through Thy Word, how to make all the use Thou wouldst have us make of this Thy holy Table, this Thy divine Sacrament of salvation ; for Thy Name's sake. Amen.

‘THE LORD’S SUPPER, OR HOLY COMMUNION,’ as our Prayer Book calls it, is one of the only two religious Rites expressly ordained by our blessed Redeemer. He personally enjoined the ‘washing of water,’ in which we are ‘baptized into the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.’ He personally enjoined the breaking and eating of bread, and the drinking of wine, ‘for a remembrance of Him,’ and in connexion with ‘the new Covenant in His Blood.’ So these two sacred Things stand apart from all other Christian rites. For they, these simple ac-

Matt. xxviii.  
19.

Matt. xxvi.  
26, etc.

tions of the body, washing, eating, drinking, are distinctly commanded by our Master. He, the great Teacher of absolutely spiritual truth, ordained just these two bodily Observances. He, who entirely condemned all merely formal worship, ordained just these two simple but solemn Forms.

May we ask, with deep reverence, why He did so? We may; for there is always an open heavenly daylight about the teaching and purposes of our Lord.

In seeking the answer to our question *why*, we are sure of two guiding truths. First, these two divine Institutions (which for ages the Christian Church has agreed to call SACRAMENTS\*) must of

\* The word *Sacramentum* was long used in Christian parlance in a sense much wider than that of a divinely-instituted external Rite. It denoted, for example, divine *Truths*, so that the

course be somehow in perfect harmony with the spiritual Gospel. Secondly, their work must of course be somehow distinct and special, a function and operation of their own. They stand apart ; so must their purpose and effect stand likewise.

Thus the blessed Supper cannot possibly, on the one hand, be a *bodily substitute* for true faith and love. It cannot possibly be a mechanical, automatic, means of grace and life. To think so would be to bring it dangerously near the nature of magical rites, incantations, amulets, charms. It would be to wander far from that heavenly

Lord's Prayer could be said to be 'as full of *sacramenta* as of words.' But it is a great benefit to have a common term for the divinely-ordained external Rites of the Gospel, and the now immemorial use of *Sacramentum* as such a term is valuable and welcome.

Gospel, which, as our Prayer Book says,\* is 'a Religion to serve God in the freedom of the Spirit.' Any view of the holy Sacrament which tends to obscure that truth is a dangerous view. The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of that pure Religion which has no promise, no blessing, for worshippers who are not 'true,' and the true worshippers are those who 'worship in spirit and in truth.' 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His;' no, not though he attends the Holy Communion itself with the utmost frequency and solemnity.

Joh. iv. 23,  
24.  
Rom. viii. 9.

Alas, such a case is very possible. It is possible to be an ardent adherent of the Church, and yet not to know the Lord. It is possible to be devout, and yet not devoted. But the Gospel is never content without devotedness; it asks al-

\* In the Preface, '*Concerning Ceremonies.*'

ways the loving surrender of a regenerated will. Without that, the Word of God itself may be only an unmeaning sound, and the Sacrament of Christ itself may be a positively deluding action.

But meanwhile, this precious Rite ‘given unto us,\* ordained by Christ Himself,’ has a work of its own to do, most special, most effectual, and truly divine.

How shall we best illustrate and understand that work ?

Let us first remember that, long before the holy Supper was ordained, God had used His people’s senses to convey blessing to their souls. He spoke to the soul of Noah a promise that there

\* The Latin Version of the Prayer Book of 1662 shews that in the Church Catechism the words ‘given unto us’ (in the second answer on the Sacraments) were understood to go with the words ‘an outward and visible sign’—‘*Signum gratiæ quod nobis datur.*’

should be no more flood. But with Gen. ix. 8-17. the Promise He gave him the Rainbow. At that glorious Token he was to look with the eyes of his body, in order that his soul might more firmly grasp the promise, might be more sure that God would keep it.\* He called Abraham, and He gave Him the mighty promise that he should be 'the heir of the world,' and He 'reckoned Gen. xv., xvii. cp. Rom. iv. 11. his faith to him for righteousness.' But He also, at Abraham's request, gave a physical, visible Seal on the promises, first in a solemnly appointed covenanting sacrifice, and then in the ordinance of Circumcision. He redeemed Israel from Egypt, but he also

\* True, the passage in Genesis speaks of *the Lord* looking upon the token, and remembering. But what reader does not see that this *in effect* means that the Rainbow was to be for *man* a visible seal upon the Lord's word?

Exod. xii.      ordained the meal of the Passover, which was both a monument of the great deliverance, and also, as it were, a signature and seal on all the promised blessings which should flow out of it.

1 Tim. i. 11.      Then at last came 'the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God.' And with it came what we may call its shining Rainbow, its happy Passover. Under the Gospel the Lord still used His people's senses to convey blessing to their souls. Drawing near to His precious atoning Death, he devised this grandly simple Seal upon its blessings. He was going, within a few hours, to be 'broken' and 'poured out' for their salvation. His holy Blood was to be drained from His wounded Body. And that Death was to be their life. Because of it, because He 'died for the ungodly,' 'giving His life a ransom for many,' they were to 'live,' in the sense

Matt. xx.  
28.

Rom. v. 6.



of being fully forgiven, justly and lovingly accepted, before the Holiness of God. And also, because of that Death, they were to 'live' in a living sense indeed; to live with spiritual and eternal life, to live in a real living Union with their living Lord, 'joined unto Him, one spirit.' His own glorious Life was to be theirs, by the Holy Ghost who dwelt in Him their Head, and who, because of the merits of His Death, was now to be poured fully into them, the limbs.

Rom. iii.  
23-26.

1 Cor. vi. 17.

See Gal. iii.  
13, 14.

Then also, in and through this their wonderful union with Him, they were to be livingly united to one another. Each limb joined to Christ was, in Him, to be joined to every other.

Thus out of the Lord's blessed Death were to flow their full Pardon, their divine Life-power, in union with Him, and also their happy Society in union with one another.

Now of all this He gave His people His sacred SEAL in His holy Supper. He gave it to strengthen their faith in Him, and thereby to deepen their life in Him and their union with Him and with one another. Its form was simple, but all-significant. His DEATH was their salvation; therefore the Sign and Seal of their salvation was engraved with the device of Death. What He gave was not bread only, but bread *and wine*; bread by itself, and wine by itself; the parable and symbol (as we shall see more fully later) of the *death-state* of the blessed Sacrifice. And the bread was bread broken; and the wine was wine poured out.

Moreover, the salvation won by His death was to become theirs only as they *received Him*, by faith. Therefore the bread was to be eaten as well as broken, and they were to drink the

wine. And they were to do this as a company together ; because their union with Him united them to one another. Thus upon this precious Ordinance, personally devised by the almost dying Lord, there was as it were engraved Christ crucified for His people, the Crucified Christ received by His people, the Crucified Christ the Bond and Oneness of His people. Such was the 'image and superscription' of the holy Sign and Seal.

Age after age that Ordinance has been observed. And because HE gave it to us, it, like Him, is 'the same, yesterday Heb. xiii. 8. and to-day and for ever,'—'till He 1 Cor. xi. 26. come.' To-day, as much as on the night in which He was betrayed, it speaks *direct from the Lord Jesus Christ*, through the believer's senses, to his soul. It is the always effectual, always divine, Guarantee to the believer of

the reality of his redemption, and of the fulness of it. It is the Seal upon the great Parchment of the New and Eternal Covenant. It is the equivalent Token of the riches of salvation ; we may with reverence compare it to the stamped and signed '*note*' with which the bank guarantees to the lawful holder the property and use of the golden coins he does not see. Or again, it is like the legal *deed* which 'is' such and such an estate, as regards right and ownership, when the deed is in possession of the rightful claimant. Going to-day to the sacred Table, in calm and humble faith,

Mar. xiv. 15. we in effect go to that 'large upper Room,' and take our place beside Peter and John, and receive from THE LORD the just-hallowed Bread and Cup, and say each to himself, — '*As surely as these lips have received the King's own Sign and Seal, at His own giving, so*

*surely do I, taking Him at His Word, possess in Him all the blessings of His death. So surely am I accepted in Him the Beloved. So surely does He, my eternal Life, live in me, and I in Him. So surely will He raise me up in glory. So surely am I one with the whole Church, which is His mystical Body, even the blessed Company of all faithful people.'*

Thus we 'go in the strength of that <sup>I Kings xix. 8.</sup> meat.' And He graciously bids us come for it again and again, and every time renew that personal interview and transaction with our King who died for us, as He seals all our blessings to us with His own hands anew.

1 Co 11<sup>26</sup>

## CHAPTER II

### THE SACRAMENT : WHAT WE SAY IN IT (i)

WE have thought of that aspect of the sacred Supper in which it speaks to us from God. I press on my reader the importance of that aspect. By many worshippers it is, I fear, much forgotten ; they think of the Communion almost only as an occasion when we specially remind ourselves of our Lord's Death, and of our fellowship together in Him.

But plainly such an ordinance as that would be might have been invented, and quite lawfully, by man, by the

Church. We may as lawfully devise for ourselves a commemorative act as make and sing a commemorative hymn. But the holy Supper was GIVEN US BY THE LORD ; it was not in the least degree instituted by the Church. And thus its very first and greatest work is to speak to us from HIM. It is His Sign and Seal ; it is His own Ratification on His own Word of Gift. It ‘conveys’ grace to us, it is ‘a means of grace’ to us, in this respect above all others, that it is His personal Guarantee appended to His promises. As I said a few pages above, it is the royal Seal on the great parchment of the New Covenant. Now, subjects cannot invent a Great Seal for themselves. It is the King’s Seal, and therefore it speaks to them from the King. It ratifies to them his will ; it assures them of his good faith.

From our blessed KING comes the

holy Supper, and its first voice to us is His, 'conveying' to us, as title deeds 'convey,' our heavenly property in Him for our present use, and being also His 'pledge to assure us,' in the future, of 'all the grace we have not tasted yet.' Moreover, it is His, not our, chosen reminder, and, as it were, picture to us, of *the way in which* He won for us all our wealth. The Seal is engraven with the precious Death ; it is inscribed with the mighty Merits of the atoning Cross.

But then, the Table of the Lord is also a place where *we speak* of Him, and to Him.

We speak *of* Him there, in His Ordinance, in His hour of feast with us. To *one another* we speak. This is the true import of 1 Cor. xi. 26 ; 'Ye announce\* the Lord's death, till he come.'

\* Authorised Version, 'Shew.' Greek, καταγγέλλετε.



Some expounders take the 'announce' to mean, 'Ye announce it *to God*; ye solemnly *tell the Father* that His Son has died for you, and thus plead His Merits at the Father's throne.' Most surely there is nothing unscriptural in making the Communion-hour a special occasion of the plea and claim of faith, in the Name of the Lamb that was slain. In fact we do this, through the voice of the Minister, in the Consecration Prayer, which is spoken in the name of the congregation. But I cannot think that 1 Cor. xi. 26 refers to such an act of faith. The word there rendered 'shew' (*καταγγέλλειν*) everywhere else in the New Testament signifies the simplest message-bearing from man to man. And surely this import is quite in point in 1 Cor. xi. 26. Christian with Christian, at the holy Table, is 'each a prophet to the rest.' Each

says to each, '*Jesus the Lord died ; I believe in Him as my Redemption, and so dost thou, and so do we all. And Jesus the Lord is coming ; I look for Him, and so dost thou, and so do we all. We pass that watchword round : He died ; He comes. So we strengthen one another's hands here before Him, in his own Ordinance of peace and of promise.*'

Then, indeed, we also speak *to Him and of Him* when, in the Holy Communion, our 'remembering hearts' are quickened by the Act He appointed and by the recorded Utterances of His very lips. It is not *only* 'Sign and Seal' to us, when we hear and see the Christian Minister enacting symbolically the Last Supper before us, and calling us to partake of its blessed provision. It is an appeal to our soul's inmost love. The Ordinance is, as it has been called, 'the coal in the flame' of remembering,

and adoring gratitude, as the believing Communicant draws near, 'with a true penitent heart and living faith.' 'The fellowship of His sufferings' is indeed tasted at such an hour, and we give ourselves anew to Him who was crucified for us. We take up *our* cross, 'to bear it after Jesus.' We 'stretch forth our hands,' a living and willing sacrifice to Him our Sacrifice.

Phil. iii. 10.

Luke xxiii.

26.  
Joh. xxi. 18.

Moreover, we take a most solemn and perfectly definite *Oath of Allegiance to Him*, at His Table. One familiar meaning of the word *sacramentum*, in the Latin classics, is the oath of the soldier to his *Imperator*, his military chief. And we, at the Table, 'submit ourselves wholly to' our Commander's 'holy will and pleasure, studying to serve Him in true holiness all our days.' We 'offer and present unto Him our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a

reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice to Him.'

Reader and friend, do not forget *that* aspect of the Ordinance. Is it sufficiently remembered, by Communicants who come to the holy Table, and by Pastors who invite their people to it? Too often, surely, in that Covenant Rite we receive the Elements—and forget to give ourselves! Remember well this matter as you draw near. Shall we come to 'this heavenly feast,' and then go out from the King's guest-chamber to dishonour Him in an unconsecrated life? Shall we go out to forget Him and His will in the company we keep, in the pleasures we frequent, in the habits we indulge, in the books we read, in the things we say of others and to others, in the way we spend our money and our time? Why, we are fresh come from our *Sacra-*

*mentum!* We are supposed to have left *our self* at our Master's Table, under our Master's feet!

## CHAPTER III

THE SACRAMENT: WHAT WE SAY IN IT (ii)

THE 'announcing' to one another of the Lord's Death, and the taking our oath of allegiance at the Lord's feet, these things we have just remembered as things which 'we say' in the use of the Sacrament of the Supper.

But these are not all our announcements and assertions there. Let us remember certain others.

1. We distinctly re-affirm to our own and our brethren's hearts that foundation fact, the Reality of the Lord Jesus

Christ Himself. Strong and deep is the witness of the Communion, not only for the heart but also for the mind, to that foundation-fact.

Did the reader ever reflect on the holy Supper as a historical evidence of Christianity, or, more precisely, a historical evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? Such it is, in a wonderful way. We may put it somewhat thus: Everything assures us that our Lord's disciples did not expect His death; it took them, when it came, as a vast surprise and disappointment; it looked to them like the ruin of all their hopes. They mourned over it, and wept. They were in a state of extreme alarm after it, 'for fear of the Jews.' They were not in the least degree *prepared* to connect with the Cross any thoughts but thoughts of sorrow and despair. Yet when they did begin, soon

after the dark crisis, to proclaim their Master to the world, we find them, from the very first, joyfully keeping, as their sacred Feast, the Supper which commemorated His *Death*, and which He instituted when about *to die*. Somehow, that once dreadful and dreaded Death had become, suddenly, and always, and for all of them, the centre of their hope and happiness. This they shewed not only by what they said, but, in this remarkable way—so sober, so solid, so ‘matter of fact’—by what they did. They always said that this extraordinary change of feeling was due to the directest but deepest of all possible reasons, the Resurrection of their buried Lord. They shewed the power of their conviction, or rather of the mysterious force from without which they knew had come upon them, by a totally new tone and spirit of joy and strength, which



soon literally shook the world. And they evidenced the clearness and calmness of their faith and certainty by this quiet but joyful use of the blessed Supper ; which we are abundantly certain *was* used from the very first in the Christian Church.

Thus the existence and observance of the holy Supper is in itself a straight and strong line of Christian Evidence. Even those who doubt or deny the divine inspiration of the Gospels will admit, if acquainted with history and its proofs, that it is mere matter of fact that the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth *were* in despair at His death, and yet did very soon indeed begin to celebrate that same death with joy, as their central blessing. And thus the Supper is, and ever has been, a solid, persistent witness to that glorious Resurrection which itself is the *only sufficient* explanation

of the whole wonderful change, and which carries, shut up in it, all our faith in the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus.

Very precious is the holy Supper, viewed in this aspect, to the mind of the tried believer. If I may illustrate it from experience, I would thankfully record the help it afforded me, not very long ago, at a time of peculiar and acute consciousness of the awful mass of sin and sorrow in the world, and of the terrible mystery of it. At such a moment the Enemy is ready enough to whisper, Can God indeed be Love? Yea, *is* God at all? And at such a moment nothing so surely and instantly helps the soul in its great trouble as the simplest possible view of Jesus Christ, slain and risen, as *fact*. 'Never let what you know be disturbed by what you do not know.' And you know HIM; Him as Fact, Him

as Truth. And He is guarantee for the love and justice of God. Around Him, the Rock, the waves of the mysteries of Providence may break, but they do not break the Rock ; and on that Rock we rest, and also work. With such thoughts in my soul, that quiet Lord's Day morning, sweet and welcome to me was the Communion which assured my mind, altogether from outside, that Jesus rose, that Jesus is.

2. But we make yet other ' announcements ' to one another in the use of the Table of the Lord. We look around as well as up ; we look forward as well as back. We look *around*, and say each to each, ' We are all one in Christ Jesus.' Taking each other for granted there as true Communicants, that is to say, as repenting and believing Christians, we repeat this all round the circle, all along the line. ' We being many ' 1 Cor. x. 17.

are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.'

Never let *the social* aspect of the holy Supper be forgotten. In Scripture, the 'breaking of bread' is invariably social, never solitary. In the order of our own Church, the utmost care is taken that it should be always social. Read the Rubrics which follow the Communion Office, and see how the Pastor is *not allowed*, however small his parish, to administer at all where there are not at least three communicants present with him. And read the interesting and moving third Rubric after the Communion of the Sick, where, even at the bed of death (so it is distinctly implied), the Communion is not to be administered if there is 'lack of company to receive with' the sick person; while the Church gives him, through the Pastor, a special mes-

sage in that case, a message full of Christ, full of peace and of the life eternal.

All this reminds us of that often forgotten aspect of the Lord's Supper—its social aspect. 'One body in Christ, Rom. xii. 5. and members one of another;' such is the watchword of the Table, from the Master, through the brethren, to the brethren.

Let it sink deep into heart and will, and spring up into life. Christ is no revolutionist, violently dislocating social order to realize on a sudden His bright ideal. But He *is* the divine Reformer of society. He lays it upon the soul of each one of His servants to remember that before Him all men are equal, and that all men are related in life and duty, and that all men are invited to come to Him and find in Him a fellowship with one another which

allows indeed for endless varieties of function and operation, but which *does* mean a mysterious, but practical, mutual union and cohesion.

Let us take this truth to the Lord's Table, and carry it away reinforced in our souls. Are we tempted to social pride and exclusiveness? Let all this be laid there under the Lord's impartial feet. Are we depressed by social neglect? Let us learn there to think of this with cheerful patience, and to do our part to others, in a life of unpretending unselfishness towards all.

3. Lastly, we not only look back as we meet at the Table ; we look forward ; we tell one another what we see in the radiant future. 'TILL HE COME.' I could wish to see those words, large and legible, inscribed over every Communion Table. In the light of 1 Cor. xi. 26, the Supper is one long

prediction of the Second Advent, and every true communicant is a seer and a prophet accordingly, for his brethren. As little is that Promise a mirage of the desert as the hallowed Bread and Wine are phantoms ; as little as our eating and drinking of them is a dream. We have seen already how the Supper says ' HE IS.' It says also, quite as articulately, ' HE COMES ;' and we pass the watchword round.

And, after all, these our messages to one another at the Table are all really utterances of THE LORD, because the Ordinance is HIS command. Not only *we* say, '*He is,*' '*We are one in Him,*' '*He comes again.*' The unseen Head of the Table really speaks : '*I am,*' '*Ye are one in Me, and in the Father,*' '*Surely I come quickly.*'

Even so come, Lord Jesus !

1 Co 11<sup>28</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

### PREPARATION

THE Church enjoins on us very grave and earnest Preparation for Communion. Let me offer now, in order, a few words upon this subject.

If I am not much mistaken, many Communicants seriously neglect the appointed duty of preparation. Multitudes now receive the Communion very often ; say, at least, every week. Frequency of reception I believe to be quite after the Lord's mind, if it is accompanied with holy care. But it may, of course, easily degenerate into mere



routine. And perhaps it leads some who practise it to be content with only a slight preparation. If it be so, 'let us do iniquity no more.' Preparation is plainly enjoined by the Church ; and, when we thoughtfully read the Service over, must we not feel that it could not be otherwise ? To come without genuine spiritual preparation to take our part in such deeds and words, such prayers and praises and promises, and acts of faith, is it not a positively reckless thing ?

Well do I know that the whole life of the true Christian should be a continual preparation for Communion. We who believe are called to live *always* 'in the Lord,' 'in the secret of the Presence' ; 'always' to 'watch and pray.' The man who walks with God is not meant to make any occasional excursion from His side. Alas for us when we do so !

‘By-path Meadow’ is dangerous walking, even for an hour. And, if we walk at the Lord’s side, we shall assuredly find there *always* our supply of what the Church lays down as requisites for a blessed Communion. You recall those requisites, if you recall your Catechism : *Repentance*, that is to say, a penitent repudiation of all further willing sinning ; *Faith*, that is to say, a humble, trustful acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His promises, as our all for peace and life ; and *Charity* with all men, that is to say, a loving, self-forgetting walk, in the service of not self but others, in the Lord.

The saintly Madame Guyon, Romanist as she was, held that the soul, truly surrendered to God, is always ready for Communion.

Yet what Christian, however bright his inward experience may be through

the mercy of God, and however true his consistency may seem to kindly eyes around, does not know in practice that he *must* have his special pauses, to ask himself before the Lord how it is with his soul. Let us make, at least, every intended Communion an occasion beforehand for a simple but real Self-examination. Let us 'examine ourselves, ■ Cor. xiii. 5. whether we be in the faith,' and whether we are living the life of faith; whether there are tokens that indeed 'Jesus Christ is in us'; whether we are really resting all on Him; whether we are really 'presenting ourselves to God, as Rom. vi. 13. those that are alive from the dead; and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' Let us do this as our Prayer Book bids us do it, not in the partial light of our own self-love and self-indulgence, but 'by the rule of God's commandments.' Keep your Bible open

as your standard, fellow-communicant, if you would keep your self-examination true. No lower standard will avail you.

One word may be said here on a special subject : Confession and Absolution before Communion.

As we are aware, the Prayer Book recommends us, in certain cases, to 'come to' the Pastor of the Parish, 'or some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word,' before we approach the Table ; 'that, by the ministry of God's Word,' we 'may receive the benefit of Absolution, together with ghostly, spiritual, counsel and advice.' The Roman Church, for many centuries, has ruled that no member of hers shall *ever* communicate without secret confession to a priest, and without the definite utterance of absolution by him, as by the representative of God. Such prac-

tice is being brought back into our own Church by not a few of her Ministers.

Let me remind my reader here of a certain fact. Such a Confession and Absolution, individual and secret, was quite unknown as a rule in the Christian Church for the first two or three centuries at least. And *not till the year 1215* was it enjoined by even the Popes as a *necessary avenue to Communion*. Need I say that the New Testament gives not the least distinct suggestion of such a practice? ‘Holy Scripture calls our confessor by the name of *One Another*,’ said Martin Luther, referring to St James v. 16.

I cannot but say to my reader, gravely and deliberately, beware of *the Confessional System*. Many a good man uses it, no doubt ; but the system is not good. It tends to put man in the place of God. It tends to place some-

thing between the soul and the Saviour. And history largely shews that it tends to have unhappy practical effects on social, civil, and, above all, on family life. It tends to put the priest where God has put the parent, or the married partner. It gives one mortal man a knowledge of another, and a power over him, which is bad for both parties. It is an unscriptural, unprimitive, and unhealthy system. And most certainly it is not the system of the English Church.

You recall the special circumstances under which the Church invites you to seek the Pastor for 'the benefit of Absolution.' It is when some hard question of the conscience specially besets you ; when some load of memory, or some difficult problem of duty, seems as if it would not yield to your self-examination and your prayers. In such a case you want a counsellor ;

and you want one who is *an expert* in the Bible, and in the soul. You want one whose commission it is to expound the Gospel message, and with the authority of his commission to apply it to your case ; and, in view of Communion, you want one who is the appointed guardian of the holy Table. All this means the ordained Christian Pastor. The Church does not say that you *must* go to him. It does not even say that you had better go to him whatever and whoever he is. He is assumed to be 'discreet and learned,' a wise and a *taught* Pastor. But, supposing him to be what he should be, it recommends you, in a very special case, to use him both as a father-friend in Christ, and as an officer of the order of the Church. Go to him ; 'open to him your grief.' Say how you dare not, without further light upon that 'grief,' come to the

Table; ask him if he, with the Bible open before him and you, and speaking to you as the Lord's Minister, will or will not bid you come, and bid you be of good cheer.

In the primeval Church, the absolution consisted not in any formula but simply in *the re-admission of the penitent to Communion*.

May we Pastors so live, so walk with God, so ponder His Word, so know our own souls, as to be indeed guides to whom, *in real need*, our people shall care thus to come for real help and blessing.

But let it never be forgotten that such consultation, such absolution, is altogether the exception, not the rule, in the plan of the Church of England. Even in the Visitation of the Sick, on what may be a dying bed, the invalid is never commanded to confess and



ask absolution. He is only reminded that in case other means seem to him to fail he may entrust (not necessarily in secret) any exceptional and obstinate burthen of his soul to his Pastor's knowledge. And then the Pastor, if the man 'humbly and heartily desire it,' is commissioned to pronounce a definite absolution, on the assumption, of course, that the confession has been that of a truly penitent soul. And history shews us that even that peculiarly solemn '*I absolve thee*' has immediate reference to the man's admission to Communion, rather than to a mysterious conveyance of God's pardon. *That* pardon is still to be received by simple faith from HIM. The Pastor conveys, as it were, 'the peace of the Church' to one who may have feared that by the special sin in question he had cut himself off from the comfort of

Communion. He bids the man in effect come in peace to the Lord's Ordinance, as one whom the Lord welcomes as a repenting and believing sinner.\*

But once again, these few words about Absolution are words on the exception, not on the rule. The rule for our preparation for Communion is, 'Let a man *examine himself*, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.' Let such self-examination be not morbid but honest. Let it be done with the Bible open, and with prayer for the Holy Spirit's light on conscience and on the Word. And by way of other helps, I know nothing better than to take two

\* See a learned sermon, *The History and Claims of the Confessional*, by C. P. Reichel, D.D., Bishop of Meath (Hodges: Dublin, 1884).

passages of the Communion Service, and test our hearts prayerfully by their language. One is the 'Long Exhortation,' '*Dearly beloved in the Lord.*' The other is the first alternative Prayer after reception of the Elements, '*Almighty and most merciful Father.*'

1 Co 10<sup>16</sup> 11<sup>24.25</sup>

## CHAPTER V

### THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

THE Lord Jesus Christ, at the Last Supper, spoke memorable words about His Body and His Blood. Taking the passover loaf, and uttering a blessing over it, (whose words we do not find recorded,) He said, 'Take, eat; this is My Body.' Taking the passover cup, and giving thanks to His Father over it, again in unrecorded words, He said, 'Drink ye all out of it; for this is My Blood,' or again, as the Holy Spirit elsewhere records Christ's meaning,

Matt. xxvi.  
26, 27; Mar.  
xiv. 26, 27;  
Luke xxii.  
19, 20; 1 Cor.  
x. 16., xi. 24,  
25.

‘This Cup is the new Covenant in My Blood.’ St Paul says to the Corinthian Christians that ‘the Cup of blessing which we bless is the partaking of Christ’s Blood, and the Bread which we break is the partaking of Christ’s Body.’

Our Church says, in the Catechism, that ‘the inward part or thing signified, in the Lord’s Supper, is the Body and Blood of Christ.’ Again, that these ‘are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper.’ Again, that ‘the benefits whereof we are partakers,’ by coming to the Holy Supper, are ‘the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ.’

In Article XXVIII. the Church quotes 1 Cor. x. 16 word for word, about ‘the partaking of the Body of Christ’ and ‘of His Blood.’

Meanwhile, in the same place, the same voice says that 'the Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner,' and that 'the means whereby it is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.' Lastly, in Article XXIX., we read that 'such as be void of a lively (a living) faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, yet are they in no wise partakers of Christ.'

With these Scriptures before us, and these utterances of the Church of England, we are bound to ponder carefully those holy words, the Body and the Blood. Otherwise we may greatly mistake their true meaning, and so greatly obscure our thought, and hinder the happy exercise of our faith, at the Table of the Lord.

We will take care then to remember that when our Master, on that night of His betrayal, on the verge of His death, spoke of His Body and His Blood, saying that the bread was His Body, and the cup was His Blood, He had a very distinct and special aspect of the Body and the Blood in view. Recalling, as we are bound to do, *the whole* of what He said, we find that it was not merely, 'This is My Body,' but, 'this is *My Body which is given for you*, or, '*broken for you*.'\* And it was not merely, 'This is My Blood,' but, 'This is *My Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed* for many for the remission of sins'; 'This cup is *the new Covenant* in My Blood.' 'My Body,' then, was not the Body in *any* aspect, but as

\* The word rendered '*broken*,' in 1 Cor. xi. 24, is not found in many ancient copies. But in any case it is implied in the context.

given and broken. 'My Blood' was not the Blood in *any* aspect, but as shed, and in connexion with a Covenant, and for the remission of sins. Such, we reverently gather, was the thought of the Lord Jesus Christ when He instituted the holy Supper. Again, we note not only His words but His action. How did He handle and manage that bread, and that cup? Did He give His disciples only the bread? Did He mingle the bread and the wine together? Did He dip, or steep, the bread in the wine? No; He gave them *the two*. And He kept the two *apart*. He uttered His blessing, and then His command, '*Eat ye,*' '*Drink ye,*' separately for each.

Now, this separation was of course significant, and it agrees exactly with His words. When, in human experience, are body and blood parted? In



death, in such death as follows on mortal wounds. So the bread of the holy Supper 'is,' the Lord's Body not under *any* aspect, but as that Body was given to death, crucified and slain. And the holy wine 'is' the Lord's Blood not under *any* aspect, but as that Blood was shed, poured out, drained from the Body in death. The bread 'is' the Body, not as the Body breathed and lived on earth, not as it is now eternally alive above, but as it lay dead that awful, blessed eventide in Joseph's tomb. The wine 'is' the Blood, not as running in 'Emmanuel's veins,' but as 'drawn from them,' when it stained the wood of the Cross, and the soil of 'the green hill far away,' after that great hour of Sacrifice.

So, believer, as you kneel at the Table, and receive that hallowed Bread and Wine, your Master's words and His

acts alike take you 'without the gate,' to the place where He died, and to the state in which, after death, His sacred Body and Blood were there. By faith, in your reception of the Sacrament, you see the day of His death, and the condition of His death. You look by faith, through the Ordinance, on 'Him

Zech. xii. 10. whom you have pierced,' and as He was when you pierced Him. You solemnly recollect, and believe, under His own renewed assurance, that His Death is your life, that 'His meritorious Cross and Passion' is your peace, and that it has won for you the presence and power of the Holy Ghost.

Thus viewed, the sacramental 'Body and Blood of Christ' are not a sort of equivalent expression for the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. They cannot be the equivalent; they are not enough to be so. 'Christ Himself' includes not

only the Body and the Blood, but the Human Soul and Spirit as He is Son of Man and the Godhead as He is Son of God. The Roman Church boldly says that the Elements in the Eucharist do contain this 'whole Christ'; Body, Blood, Soul, Godhead.\* But this is indeed to be wise above what is written, wise above what HE spoke. All HE said was, 'This is my Body which is given,' 'This is my Blood which is shed.'

The sacramental Elements which 'are that Body and Blood, are thus to you the Lord's own divine picture, monument and seal, of His precious DEATH for you. And because they are HIS picture, monument and seal, they speak to you direct from Him. As we saw above, it is not your device, nor the Church's device; it is HIS Ordinance.

\* See *Catechism of Trent*, ii., iv., 31, 32.

Therefore your reception is just as if HE stood visibly at that Table (at it, not on it), even as He sate visibly at that other Table long ago. It is as if HE, not His Minister, stepped to your side, and said to you, 'Eat,' 'Drink.' It is as if HE said to you, *'As surely as your senses feel, as surely as your body takes, these material things, so surely do you, believing, share all the blessings of My Cross and Passion. Peace be to thee; Go in peace; Thy sins be forgiven thee; Receive thou the Holy Ghost.'*

If this is so, we can now more distinctly understand what it is to *eat* the Body and *drink* the Blood in the holy Supper, and to have 'our souls strengthened and refreshed' there 'by the Body and the Blood.' It is, that 'our souls are strengthened and refreshed' by the Death of our Redeemer

for us ; yea, by Himself so viewed ; by the dying Lamb of Calvary. The Body and the Blood, as presented to our faith in the Lord's Supper, are things which, *literally*, exist no longer ; for *in the Calvary state* that most sacred Body is now no more. They are not existing things to be infused into our being ; they are an infinitely precious Fact to be appropriated by our faith. Thus 'faith,' faith in Christ, in His work and word, is, as the Article says, 'the means whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper.'

And is this a poor and meagre account of our sacramental feasting ? Surely it is not.

' As living souls are fed,  
So feed me, or I die.'

Is it not a life-giving feeding when 'the living soul,' in the very presence

of Christ, in His Ordinance, grasps anew 'the innumerable benefits of His Passion'? Is it not a genuine 'strengthening and refreshing' when the happy, penitent Christian *knows*, under the Lord's hand and seal, that pardon and acceptance are full and present, and that the gift of the blessed Spirit is full and present too, and that

1 Pet. i. 11. 'the glories that should follow on the sufferings of Christ' are also the believer's covenanted possession in his Lord? Yes, this is a real, and also a special and distinctive, sacramental feeding. 'The Body and the Blood of Christ are' thus 'verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.'

It will be well occasionally to go over the Communion Service and to see how, everywhere, the Church

keeps 'the Lord's Death' before us thus.

The Sacrament is 'to be received in Invitation. remembrance of His meritorious Cross and Passion.'

'Above all things we must give most Long Exhortation. humble and hearty thanks for the redemption of the world by the Death and Passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and Man; who did humble Himself, even to the Death upon the Cross, for us miserable sinners.' 'And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained to us, He hath instituted and ordained holy Mysteries, as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His Death.'

Consecration  
Prayer.

‘Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer Death upon the Cross for our redemption ; who made there by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world, and did institute . . . a perpetual memory of that His precious Death, until His coming again ; hear us, O merciful Father, and grant that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ’s holy institution, in remembrance of His Death and Passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood.’

At the De-  
livery.

‘The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ *which was given for thee*, preserve thy body and soul. . . Take and eat this



in remembrance that Christ *died* for thee.'

'The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ *which was shed for thee*, preserve thy body and soul. . . Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood *was shed* for thee.'

'We beseech Thee to grant that by the merits and Death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we, and all Thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion.'

First Prayer  
after Com-  
munion.

'Thou dost assure us thereby . . . that we are heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious Death and Passion of Thy dear Son.'

Second  
Prayer after  
Communion.

'O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.'

Gloria.

58 *The Body and Blood of Christ*

So with solemn joy at the Holy Table, we 'announce the Lord's DEATH, till He come.' All is concentrated on that Death. For in that Death is included, and out of that Death flows, all we believers have of peace with God, and power in God, and good hope through His eternal grace.

In 653

## CHAPTER VI

### FEEDING ON CHRIST

‘FEED on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.’ So says the English Minister, as he delivers to each Christian the holy Bread which ‘is’ the Lord’s Body.\* In the first Invitation to the Communion we read that our Heavenly Father ‘hath given His Son our Saviour

\* I grieve to think that in some English churches the second part of each formula of Delivery is now habitually omitted, quite without authority, and that thus by many Communicants the words here quoted are never heard.

Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual Food and Sustenance in this holy Sacrament.' In the Longer Exhortation, now often omitted, but to my mind one of the most precious passages in our Liturgy, we are reminded that, 'if with a true penitent heart and lively, living, faith we receive this holy Sacrament, then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood.' And in the second of the two Prayers which follow the Reception, 'we most heartily thank the ever-living God that He vouchsafes to feed us, who have duly received these holy Mysteries, with the spiritual Food of the most precious Body and Blood of His Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.'

This feeding, this eating and drinking, is one of the most central and vital things in the blessed Communion. In

our day it is not an unknown thing to see ‘non-communicating attendants,’ worshippers who only witness the consecration of the Elements, without partaking. Let it be distinctly remembered that such a practice can nowhere be traced in what we know of the worship of the primitive Church. It is man’s device, not the Lord’s Ordinance. I do not say that there is, *in itself*, any sin in witnessing the holy Supper without communicating. But I do say that our Church does not intend us to do so, and, what is far more important still, that there is not a hint that our blessed Master intended us to do so. When He said ‘Do this,’ He had just said, ‘Take, eat ; drink ye all of this.’ To omit the feeding is to use His Ordinance *not* as He designed it. To those who do so it may be a solemn and interesting occa-

sion, but one of their own devising. It has no message to them, no gift for them, direct from HIM.

But let us put that matter aside, and think now in peace on the blessedness, on the holy significance, of this act of feeding, taken in the light of what it seals and signifies.

When we eat and drink at our own tables, what a simple action it is to us, and what a vital matter it is for our bodily health and strength! You eat that bread, or meat, or fruit; you drink that water; it is an almost unconscious action of hands, lips, teeth and throat.

*Your* part, as regards your will and act, is done; the food has entered your system. But now *it* begins to do its work, and that without your will and act, at least in the same sense as that in which you willed and acted in eating and drinking. By God's mysterious con-

stitution of your body and its surroundings the stores of 'strength and refreshment' in that food are now digested, distributed, through your bodily being, and (whether you think of it or not) are making themselves felt in blood, in nerve, in brain, in every organ of faculty and sense. You take the food ; the food, if I may say so, maintains you. It supplies your need out of its own stores of energy, which your eating and drinking sets free within you.

Weary soul, your eyes are dim with spiritual toil and care ; your knees are feeble as you plod on under the day's duties and trials ; your hands hang down. *Have you taken time to feed ? Have you sought 'leisure to eat' ?* You are to work, but first to feed. You are to live, not on your work, but on your food. And the Lord Jesus

Col. iii. 4. Christ is your food. 'Christ is your life'; Christ in what He is, Christ in what He has done, Christ in what He is doing, for and in His people. Have you lately fed on Him, taking an ample meal? 'Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved;' so says the Lord of the Bridal Feast. Have you obeyed? If not, do not wonder at your exhaustion, and do not delay to 'eat Him.'

Song v. 1.

Joh. vi. 57.

Bodily feeding offers us a perfect parable in this matter. Bodily feeding needs a mouth, and the voluntary use of that mouth. Then the food, as we have remembered, in a sense, 'takes care of itself,' and of you. The soul too has its mouth, and must use it. 'He that *believeth on Me* shall never thirst,' says the Lord. 'I live by *believing in* the Son of God,' says St Paul. And if we want to translate

Joh. vi. 35.

Gal. ii. 20.



such words into the dialect of our daily life, what do they mean? They mean that we feed on the Lord when we take Him at His word, in all He offers Himself to be, and when we *use Him* so.

Is He 'made unto us Righteous-<sup>1 Cor. i. 30.</sup> ness'? Take Him at the word, and be at peace, O sinner, in His Merits, as you 'nestle into Him.'<sup>\*</sup> Is He 'made unto you Sanctification'? Take Him at the word, and so put His power between the Tempter and your weak heart. Let *Him* 'fight for you while<sup>Exod. xiv. 13, 14.</sup> you hold your peace,' and 'stand still, and see.' Is He 'made unto you Redemption' from death and the grave? Take Him at the word, and in His name quietly dismiss those fears which *He* has already dealt with for you. Are

<sup>\*</sup> The phrase is (nearly) the martyr Tyn-  
dale's : *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.*

Heb. xiii. 8. you afraid of to-day? Use Him as 'the same yesterday and to-day.' Are you afraid of to-morrow? Use Him as 'the same to-day and for ever.' Eat and drink Jesus Christ; He will not fail, once 'taken in,' to strengthen you and refresh you. 'He that eateth Me, even he shall live because of Me.'

It is new life, in a most blissful sense, when we grasp the simplicity and power of this thought of feeding; when we learn how to take Christ in, to appropriate Him, to assimilate Him, by faith, which is not only the receiving hand of the soul, but also its receiving mouth. Great rest, and the power which comes with spiritual rest, follow on such feeding. Many a man who has struggled to exhaustion while he thought only or mainly of the struggle, has risen to meet temptation, and sorrow, and work, with a calm, invin-

cible readiness when he has remembered his living and hidden Bread and Wine, and, by the very simplest practical trust, has 'eaten Him,' has 'come unto Him to drink.'

In 6<sup>53</sup> Seph 3'7

## CHAPTER VII

### FEEDING ON CHRIST IN THE HOLY COMMUNION

WE have spoken of spiritual feeding in general. And now, what is the special connexion of it all with the Table of the Lord, and with our action of eating and drinking there?

First, as we hardly need to explain, but as we do need continually to remember, priceless teaching lies in the fact that this central Ordinance of the Christian life *is* just an Ordinance of eating and drinking. We have seen already\* that eating and drinking are

\* See p. 60.

quite essential things in our use of the divine Supper; we make an unauthorized use of the Rite if we do not eat and drink. Does not this carry home to us, through our senses, and direct from the LORD, the truth on which we have been dwelling? It says, with all the eloquence of a Galilean parable, *'You must live, not on your work, but on your food. You must be fed, you must feed, if you would live; you must take in something which is not yourselves if those 'selves' are to live and work as your Lord would have them do.'*

Yes, this remarkable fact, I had almost said this startling fact, about the great Christian Ordinance, brings this principle powerfully home to the soul which thinks and sees. It reminds us that we are to 'go in the strength of <sup>1 Kings xix. 8.</sup> that meat'—not by any supposed force which we can generate of ourselves.

And *the simplicity* of spiritual reception of Christ, as well as the necessity of it, shines out of the Ordinance. How simple is the bodily act of taking food ! And no spiritual act is simpler than that of receiving Christ. 'The means is faith' ; trustful acceptance, accepting trust ; directed on Him in His Word, Eph. iii. 17. and because of His Word ; 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts *by faith.*'

Is it paradoxical, this mighty power of faith ? Not more so than the mighty power of lips and throat when the strong meat, or reviving cordial, is taken in to the exhausted body. The 'mighty power' is not really in lips and throat, but in what they, and only they, can receive and do receive. The 'mighty power' is not properly in the faith, but in Him Whom it lets into the weary being, that He may do there

a work which He, not faith, does ; Himself making our weakness strength and our pollution purity.

Thus it is as *natural*, in an intelligible sense, as it is wonderful, that He by Whom His people live should have ordained an Act of Feeding as what I may call His own Parable-Ordinance, at the very centre of His religion. It is to remind His people for ever that they vitally need Him to be their Life. And it is to teach them the simplicity of the way in which they are to receive Him and to enjoy Him as their Life.

But something more special has to be said about the feeding enjoined upon us at the holy Table. Here we must go back to our last chapter but one, and remember what we saw of 'the Body and the Blood.' We saw that those sacred words take us indeed to the Lord Jesus Christ, but to Him in a

special aspect, as regards the *immediate* reference. They take us to Golgotha, and to the Good Friday evening, when the setting sun (free now from the great darkness of that awful afternoon) shone upon a Tomb which enclosed a slain Body, and upon a Cross dyed with the holiest of all Blood.

So the *immediate* thought conveyed by the 'Eat' and 'Drink' of the Last Supper is the thought of our feeding on Christ Jesus as a *Crucified* Saviour; the Lamb of the Passover-Sacrifice; the Victim given as our Ransom-Price, and as the price of all the countless blessings included in our Ransom.

'Eat my Body; Drink my Blood'; these, then, are words which properly and immediately point us not to the Throne of Glory but to the Cross of Sacrifice. They set before us, properly and immediately, not the Lord in



heaven, as He is, but the Lord torn and slain, as He was, when His Blood was shed and His limbs were cold.

So our 'feeding on Him, in the heart by faith, with thanksgiving,' at the Table, is first and properly a feeding on Him as our Atonement, our Reconciliation, our Life-bringer, through His ever-blessed Cross and Passion. It is the soul's humble, thankful reception of Him, under His own Seal, at His own almost audible word, as its crucified Redeemer. The Communion is the Sacrament of Calvary. It is, as some of our older divines have well called it, 'a Feast upon a Sacrifice'; a glad, believing, special 'reception of Rom. v. 11. the Atonement' at the very hands, as it were, of the Atoner.

Not that for a moment our thought and our faith are to be *limited* at the Lord's Supper to that glorious line of

truth, that red line of holy Blood. For in the fact of that Atonement there lie shut up, ready to be poured out, all our 'innumerable benefits,' all 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' That precious Death, crowned indeed by Resurrection and Ascension, but *still that Death*, set free for us the gift of Pentecost, the fulness of the Holy Spirit. All that we have as our actual part and lot in Christ is by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit 'receives of His things and shews them to us'; the Spirit joins us to the Lord our Head; the Spirit brings Christ's presence into our hearts and maintains it there. If we owe Pentecost to Calvary, as we do, then we owe to Calvary all our new life, in all its aspects, here and for evermore. Therefore, in a sense most true and precious, we do, in the blessed Supper, see Christ, and take Christ, and feed

Eph. ii. 8.

See Gal. iii.  
13, 14.

Joh. xvi. 14.

Eph. iv. 4,  
iii. 17.

on Christ, in *all* His aspects and *all* His riches. We are to receive Him there to be our Power as truly and gladly as we receive Him to be our Pardon. We are to go away home, peacefully knowing that 'we have ALL IN HIM.' But, I repeat it, the *immediate and peculiar* significance of the eating and drinking at the Table has to do with the Atoning Cross, the 'full, perfect, sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction,' once made, once offered, never to be repeated. The other aspects of 'feeding,' or rather the other aspects of the Lord our Saviour as our Food, are, *at the holy Table*, subordinate to this; they are as it were approached through this, and through this alone.

Let the reader once more as above (p. 55) go through our Communion Service, and he will see how fully the

Church recognizes this as, so to speak, the main message of the Ordinance ; up to that last rapturous song, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, with its adoration of 'THE LAMB OF GOD that taketh away the sins of the world.'

One word more, in reiteration, ere we leave this subject. In view of this great Calvary-message of the Lord's Supper, it is very plain that faith, and only faith, not mouth or lips, 'receives' the true\* 'Body and Blood of Christ.' For the Body and Blood as they were on the Cross 'are,' literally, as such, no more. The Body was 'the Body of' His 'humiliation,' not 'of His glory.' The Blood (does not Scripture indicate this?) is, literally, no more ; no mention is made, in narrative, of the sacred Blood after the Resurrection. So the

Phil. iii. 20.

\* See p. 53.

Body and Blood, as viewed in the Supper, are things historically past, not present. And so the literal eating and drinking of them must be, as to physical contact, impossible. They are, literally and historically, gone, and lips and throat therefore cannot touch them. But spiritually, in their divine effects, in the blessings and glories they have won, they '*are*' indeed. In that respect faith, which conquers time, sees them, touches them, takes them, feeds on them.

These reflections tend to remind us that it is at best a doubtful theory that the great work of the holy Supper is to infuse into us the glorified Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the holy Table, not His glorified Humanity (which includes, of course, as we have remembered, His Human Spirit) but His once crucified Body and Blood are

before us. We receive the Sacrament—the outward and visible divine Sign—of *Them*, not of *It*. Our living Union with Him as (not Man only but) God and Man, one Christ, blessed and glorified for ever, is by the Holy Ghost, through faith, which is the gift of God. The salvation hereafter of our bodies is through the salvation here of our spirits by the merits of His death and the power of His Spirit.\*

See Rom.  
viii. 11.

At the holy Supper we feed, by faith, under the divine Seal and Equivalent, the Elements, on Christ Crucified. Through Christ Crucified we are partakers of the Holy Ghost. Through the power of the Holy Ghost we who believe are one with Christ Glorified ; blessed be His Name.

\* Compare Bp Jeremy Taylor, *On the Real Persence*, vii. § 8.

Lk 22<sup>20</sup>

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE COVENANT AND THE CUP \*

Too many Christians, I fear, direct little if any distinct faith towards the CUP of the Communion and the blessings specially connected with it.

Yet some of the most precious truths which gather round the Table of the Lord are found as it were in that Cup. They are blessings full of peace, joy and power. They are things of which

\* This chapter is abridged and slightly altered from a tract by the author, entitled *The Cup of the Covenant* (Marshall).

a clear and believing view will give new meaning to the well-known words,

‘ And oh what transport of delight  
From Thy pure chalice floweth ! ’

With this in view, I put before the reader two words of Scripture ; Heb. x. 16-17 ; St Luke xxii. 20. In the first passage certain things are said about ‘ *a New Covenant* ’ which the Lord makes with His people, and about two great blessings guaranteed in it. In the second our Lord Jesus Christ takes the Cup at the Last Supper, and says, ‘ *This Cup is the New Covenant* \* in My Blood which is shed for you.’

Thus both texts combine to say to

\* The word ‘ Covenant,’ instead of ‘ Testament,’ is used, and rightly, in the Revised Version here. I venture to think that ‘ Covenant ’ is the right rendering for *διαθήκη* *everywhere* in the New Testament.



us something about the 'NEW COVENANT.'

Has the reader ever felt an almost dislike of the word Covenant, or, however, a certain tendency to avoid it? Many Christians, certainly many young Christians, do so. The word presents to them a somewhat hard and angular aspect. It seems to lack warmth and life. They do not feel a heart beating in it, nor does it seem to stretch out arms to embrace them. They turn perhaps by preference to softer and more charming words, and pass by this piece of rock.

But is there nothing welcome in the thought that it *is* a piece of *rock*? What if it is a corner of the Rock of Ages? Let us look at it again. What ideas do we associate with the word 'covenant' in common life? Not much that is emotional, certainly, but a great

## 82    *The Covenant and the Cup*

deal that carries with it the rest and strength of absolute security.

A Covenant is *an undertaking sealed and assured with peculiar care*. It means something better than mere warm wishes, or agreeable possibilities. It leads us to thoughts of definite engagements, guarantees of possession, fixity of tenure. It suggests something which is so provided for us that we may *lay claim to it*; that we may not wish for it merely, or aspire to it, or even only beg for it, but unquestionably *know* that it is our own. Are you a possessor of some piece of property, land or house? If so, I cannot think that you regard the parchment which contains your title as a dry or uninteresting document, or that you complain because its language is not warm, or because its pages are not richly illuminated. To you the dry precision

of its legal terms, and the carefully witnessed seal and signature at the foot, are supremely interesting. You would not exchange them, as regards your property and possession, for the most affectionate letter ever written, or for the most beautiful of paintings. And why? Because they secure you in your ownership, under a covenant good at law.

If it be so, we will never again turn coldly away from the Word which tells us of the 'New Covenant,' the 'New Covenant in His Blood.'

Now, as we rest in thought before the holy Table, let us take up first the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews. <sup>Heb. x. 16, 17.</sup> Here we have God's own parchment scroll, as it were, spread before us. Here He bids us spell out the legal language of His blessed Court, and see what under it we have and hold.

All is summed up under two great

## 84 *The Covenant and the Cup*

Covenant Gifts : first, an abundant *Pardon* ; then, a divine *Power* upon the heart.

You will remark the order in which I place the two. Does it seem to reverse the order of Scripture, as if the Scripture set the gift of Pardon *after* this gift of Power upon the heart, while we have placed it first? It is indeed so, if the wording only, without its connexion, is regarded, But look through the wording to the thought and to the argument, and it will be seen that I am only interpreting, not reversing. These words from the

xxi. 31-34.

Epistle are a quotation from Jeremiah ; and in Jeremiah, as a glance will shew, the glorious pardon is promised as the first Covenant Gift, and the change of heart as the second, resulting somehow *from* the first:—  
'*For* I will forgive their iniquity,

and I will remember their sin no more.'

Therefore remember, weary and perplexed disciple, that a pardon for all your sins is the first grant of this sacred Covenant, into which the God of Covenant invites you. Remember accordingly that while, in one respect, you will *beg* that pardon as a suppliant, nay, as a mendicant, looking for mere mercy ; in another respect you are invited by that very mercy to do nothing less than *claim* it. Ponder well that word 'claim.' There are human lives in which it has been the converting word. I know personally one such case ; it is that of a dear and revered friend of my own, into whose soul it flashed, as with the light of a new life, that he was divinely intended to claim, then and there, his peace with God. In other words, he learnt to read the divine

promise as a Covenant promise ; to shew his Lord, as it were, His own deed of gift ; to claim possession accordingly ; and to go away, humbly knowing that God's guarantees were good.

May I take it for granted that my reader has already, perhaps long ago, 'made his claim' under *that* great Covenant promise, and has thus already entered on the peaceful certainty that acceptance before God for Christ's

Numb. xxiii.  
16.

sake is his, just because 'God is not a man that He should lie'?

Now let me remind him in turn that our great Legal Document contains more than this. Read your Title Deeds to the end ; and remember that to the end they are covered by the same Signature, and by the same blood-red Seal.

What is *the other* great treasure

of God's gift and of our possession which is to be claimed by us, humbly, but definitely, with our hand upon the Covenant Seal, and our heart at rest in the truthfulness of God? — '*I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them.*'

Mark well the words. Take reverent notice that the Lord has engaged Himself, to all and sundry who will take Him at His word, and therefore now to you, not only to do great things *for* us in forgiveness but also to do great things *in* us in holiness. This is the main point of the precious passage to which I have referred. I dare to say that the other, the first, great Covenant Gift, the miracle of a perfect pardon from the Holy One, is given but for the sake of this; given, I mean, in order that there

may be room for this. Your faithful God, O man of the Covenant, guarantees to you an abundant pardon in order that He may justly guarantee to you a blessed inward hallowing. You have humbly claimed the former. Have you claimed with like simplicity, and reverence, and thankfulness, the latter? You are intended to do so, and to do it even now.

Note carefully the phrases in your great Title Deed:—‘*I will put,*’ ‘*I will write.*’ It is not *you* that are to lodge this treasure in your heart, and to write this wonderful inscription on the difficult surface of your mind. Perhaps you have tried to do so, often and earnestly, in the past. And the effect has been—I will not say *nothing*; not so, God forbid; but it has been at best a sadly scrawled, and often misspelt, inscription.



But now you read the Covenant Promise once more, and you *give the pen to the Promiser*. Your work, by His grace, is to present to HIM the surface, and to welcome His inscribing hand. Yes, you now yield to HIM, with a happy simplicity, your heart and your mind. You now tell HIM how greatly you have failed to transcribe there the holy laws you have read in His Statute Book, and then you lay your meek claim before Him that HE shall write.

You know well the power by which He will do it. It is 'by the Holy <sup>2 Tim. i. 14.</sup> Ghost that dwelleth in you.' HE shall so work in response to that humble trust that, behold, the old resistance to the will of God, the old preference of self's will to the will of God, shall wonderfully give way. Your soul shall come, you know not how, to say, 'Oh how I <sup>Psal. cxix. 97.</sup>

90 *The Covenant and the Cup*

Matt. xi. 30; love Thy Law,' 'Thy commandments  
1 Joh. v. 3. are not grievous,' 'Thy yoke is easy.'

'Thy wonderful sweet will, my God,  
With triumph now I make it mine;  
And faith shall say a joyous Yes  
To every dear command of Thine.'

Even so; this is yours by title deed,  
by Covenant. This is to be viewed  
by you not as a possible luxury of the  
religious life, not as a prize reserved for  
the spiritual ambition of the few. It  
is expressly promised, it is fully cove-  
nanted, for *all* 'the Israel of God.'

Obad. 17. Let them, let us, 'possess our pos-  
session.' Let us carry to their Lord,  
who loves to be dealt with thus, His  
Parchment, His Signature and Seal.  
In other words, let us take the pro-  
mises to the God of Promise, and *act*  
2 Tim. ii. 13. *upon them* with the certainty that 'He  
cannot deny Himself.'

I can only point to all this and thus awaken your attention to the magnificence of this great second Gift of the Covenant as a thing no more to be struggled for by the efforts of self than was your pardon. Do not mistake my meaning. There is abundance of work for you in connexion with it. The elaboration of the results, the 'working out' of your salvation, will be a lifelong thing. Fear not lest you should have small occasion for watching and for prayer, and for growth in all the habits of a true self-discipline! But here is the glorious Gift which these actions will only develop. And it is promised, covenanted, given. Here is the power and working of the Holy Ghost, able at your very 'springs of thought and will' to make all things new, to transform your inner world, and thus most surely to transform the

Phil. ii. 12.

outer world in its relation to yourself.

And now, as it were before the Table of the Lord, furnished for us and prepared, we recall that first Communion Hour, and listen to the Great Pastor of His people, as He gives them the holy Cup on that awful, blessed evening, 'that same night that He was betrayed.' Mark the words of JESUS: '*This Cup is the New Covenant in My Blood.*' He said that saying very long ago; but—once said—it is eternal 'till He come.' The holy Table, every time you draw near to it, is just as much as ever the Table OF THE LORD. Spiritually, it is the very same Table as that which stood in the Upper Chamber; spiritually, the Head of the Table is 'the same for ever.' The appointed servant of the Church of God, the Christian Pastor, for holy order's sake, gives you

the sacred Bread and the sacred Cup. But the true Giver is as much as ever 'this same JESUS,' as really as if you saw Him in His holy bodily Presence stand on that step and carry the Element to your hand. Take that 'pure chalice' from the mortal giver, exactly as if you took it from the visible Christ Himself. And as you take it, and as you taste the hallowed wine, remember that it is then and there to you, in all the fulness and power of those first words, 'the Cup of His New Covenant.'

What would you feel if you literally saw HIM give it, and heard HIM say the words? *Could* you doubt and falter, wondering whether or no all that Covenant and all its blessings were for you? No; you would go back to your home with the same rest of faith with which the nobleman Joh. iv. 50.

went back from Cana to Capernaum. You would have seen the Lord. You would have heard the Lord. And you would have *taken the pledge which the Lord commanded you to take*. Therefore you would be as certain of the possession as you would be certain by your senses that you had touched and taken the Pledge and Seal of possession, at His word.

It would have been a personal interview with Christ ; it would have been a personal transaction with Christ ; a transaction carrying all the certainties of Bond and Covenant sealed with blood.

Well, but all this has really happened now in that quiet Communion Hour in the familiar House of God ; and it will happen again next time. True, you have not seen Jesus Christ with your body's eyes ; but Who is He that said,

Joh. xx. 29. 'Blessed are they that have not seen

and yet have believed'? By faith—not by fancy, nor by feeling, which are far different things, but by faith—you have seen Him, in His Ordinance. By faith you have heard Him, in His Word. And quite literally you have touched and taken His authentic physical Seal of Covenant. You *have had* your personal interview, your personal transaction. Therefore, in the bliss of a quiet certainty, you are to go back to your home, to go out into life, 'know-<sup>2</sup> Tim. i. 12, ing whom you have believed, and that He is able to keep what you have committed unto Him.' As surely as your lips touched that wine, as surely as the senses of your body concurred in that act with the obedience of your soul, so surely are you to know that Jesus Christ died for you, yes, for you ; and that Jesus Christ lives in you, yes, in you.

96    *The Covenant and the Cup*

‘ Before Thy Table, Lord, I kneel,  
    And clasp the Cup of holy wine,  
The great New Covenant’s royal seal,  
    Authentic, visible, divine.

‘ Thy two-fold grant, it all is here—  
    The death-bought Peace, the cleansing  
        Power ;  
Sure is Thy Seal, my Title clear ;  
    I claim the whole this blissful hour.’



1658

## CHAPTER IX

### OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

OUR Thoughts on the Supper of the Lord may fitly close with a few pages on that blessed aspect of it, its Thanksgiving aspect, its radiant side of praise and joy.

THE EUCHARIST; we all know the word. It is ancient, as old at least as the early years of the second century; and it has been continually in use till now. What is it? It is simply *Eucharistia*, the Greek for THANKSGIVING, and it marks for ever this bright and beautiful characteristic of

the Communion, that it is pre-eminently an Ordinance of grateful Praise.

In the ancient Communion Offices\* this characteristic was largely brought out. Praise was offered in some of them, at great length, 'for all the blessings of this life;' for the seasons, the crops, for peace and good government. Praise was offered for Redemption in its whole course and history, from the earliest dealings of God with man onwards to the crowning victory of grace in Christ. In our present Liturgy, though the long and detailed praises are omitted, there is still abundant 'Eucharist.' 'It is our duty to render most humble and hearty THANKS to Almighty God, our heavenly Father,

The Invitation.

\* In their present form, as regards many details, few of these are older than the fifth century. But they witness within limits to usages of earlier times.

for that He hath given His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy Sacrament.’ ‘Above all things, ye

*The Longer  
Exhortation.*

must give most humble and hearty THANKS to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man.’ ‘To Him, therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, let us give, as we are bounden, continual THANKS.’ ‘Lift up your hearts ;’ ‘Let us give THANKS unto our Lord God.’ ‘It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give THANKS unto Thee.’ Immediately after these last words, as we well know, there follow, on the great Festivals, special Thanksgivings—for the

Incarnation, for the Atonement and Resurrection, for the Ascension and Heaven, for the Pentecostal Gift and the Gospel, and for the glory of the Triune God of Love; and then we join 'all the company of Heaven,' and 'LAUD and magnify' the Name of the Holy One. After the act of Communion, and after the combined utterance of the Lord's Prayer, follows a prayer on which we shall dwell more in detail later (p. 124, etc.), a prayer breathing penitent joy and praise all through. In the alternative prayer which stands next to it, 'we most heartily THANK' our blessed God for the Holy Communion, as a means of spiritual feeding, and as a warrant of our peace with Him, of our union with Christ, and of our coming glory, won by the merits of His Death. Then at length the worship is closed with the *Gloria in Excelsis*, one of the

oldest *strata* of our multifold Communion Office, in which adoring prayer is encircled and enshrined all round with rapturous praise. So comes finally the Peace of God to dismiss the praising worshippers.

My words on this Eucharistic praise and joy shall be of the very simplest. I long to leave on my reader's soul, and on my own, in view of it, a living impression of the *holy happiness* which pervades all true thoughts of the blessed Supper. 'Let us keep THE 1 Cor. v. 8. FEAST.' Christian disciple, preparing for the holy Table, kneeling at it, retiring from it, thinking of it—whatever else you are, be happy, be full of the light and warmth of grateful, praising joy. Where are you? Where have you been? At the festal Table of your beloved Lord, Who died for your pardon, for your more than pardon—

for your full acceptance in Him, for your glorious righteousness in His mighty Merits. At the festal Table of 'this same Jesus,' who is now alive for you, and in you; who is at this very moment your Life, your Victory, your Power, your Rest. At the festal Table of Him who is your coming Heaven,

<sup>1</sup> Tim. i. 1. 'the Lord Jesus Christ which is our Hope;' in whom death is for you

<sup>2</sup> Tim. i. 10. 'abolished,' in whom glory is already begun in you, for He, the King of Glory, is in you by His Holy Spirit's work. You have been the dear welcome guest of this wonderful Host. He is

Jer. xxiii. 6. 'the Lord your Righteousness,' 'the

Exod. xv. 26. Lord your Healer,' 'the Lord your

Isai. lx. 19. everlasting Light.' He is yours, in all His fulness, for life and for death, for joy and for sorrow, for company and for solitude. He is yours to-day, for every possible need which you

have to meet and feel as each hour goes by. He is yours for to-morrow ; you need 'take no thought for it,' Matt. vi. 34. having Him with it in prospect. He is yours for the yesterday of the whole past ; He, who eternally *is*, *was* with you then, and remembers all you yearn for, and will restore the years which the ruthless locust of Time hath See Joel i. 25. eaten.

He is your inexhaustible Resource, O weakest of believers. In the merits of His sacrificial Death, by 'His one Sacrifice once offered,' He has won for you, as your lawful possession, *His whole Self*, all the fulness of God in Him ; and this is His sacramental Feast of joy over it all. This is His tangible Seal on the grant and gift of your vast possessions. This is His Equivalent, His Guarantee, for the solid reality of your interest in His finished

Work, in His unceasing Intercession, in His living Indwelling, in His coming Glory. Will you not be *glad* here? Shall it not be deep happiness to listen to the Consecration Prayer which sets apart the Bread and Wine to be, to the eye of faith, the very scene and sacrifice of Calvary itself, the very Body slain, the very Blood shed there? Shall it not be a positive joy to take and eat, to take and drink, and by your bodily senses to be assured that this your wonderful salvation is 'a sober certainty of waking bliss'? 'Here I touch my salvation,' said a thankful worshipper once to himself at the holy Table as he took the Bread. He realized in that blissful moment how in THE LORD'S Ordinance it was none less than THE LORD who gave His weak servant the divine Pledge of Love, the divine Seal and Sign of 'the



unspeakable Gift ' which is given, now and here, to the soul that takes it always, everywhere, by faith.

Let us be tenderly, simply, deeply, reverent at the holy Table. Let the preparation be searching, let the penitence be true, and the confession deep. But oh let the faith (not in the Sacrament, but in Christ, Who gives the Sacrament to fix, warrant, and deepen our faith in HIM), let the faith be absolutely simple and restful, and let the happiness have its way ; happiness in the Lord of the Feast, happiness deep as the soul and bright as the possession of HIM can make it, and let it go out with you from the Table, from the Church, into life, into the life of home, of business, of profession, of whatever it may be. You have feasted with your Lord and Life ; now continue to feast on Him. He has personally, and

by a bodily act, as it were by a grasp of His hand, assured you again that you are His and He is yours. Carry your Communion everywhere with you. In a sense, in that life of the soul which transcends time and place, the Supper, the Table, like the mysterious Rock of old, 'do follow you.' They seal and signify all your blessings. So all your blessings, always, everywhere, are to be enjoyed as it were at the Table, in the Supper. The Sacrament, so viewed, is a thing which in its nature transcends place and time.

Cor. x. 4.

Isai. ii. 5.

Then be a happy Christian if you are a true Communicant. Walk away from the Table 'in the light of the Lord.' Carry everywhere the power of 'this our Sacrifice of praise of thanksgiving.'

Some years ago, it was in 1872, a venerable patriarch of science, Adam

Sedgwick, was spending his last days in his rooms in Trinity College, Cambridge. Too feeble to attend the long service in the College Chapel, he used to receive the Holy Communion at a friend's hands in private. That friend told me that many a time he knew not how to proceed with the ministration; the old Geology Professor burst out into one ascription after another, full of the joy of redemption, praising and giving thanks.

We cannot, we should not, thus audibly break in on the public solemnities of our Eucharist. But shall not our *hearts* continually raise their shout and song, heard in Heaven, in the ear of Him who 'spared not His own Son,' Rom. viii. 32. and with Him also freely gives us all things'?

AMEN : SO BE IT.

## THE SACRAMENT

THE Church is silent, the white Table  
spread

With order'd Elements, the Wine, the  
Bread ;

The Pastor lifts the hand and speaks the  
word,

And lo—Thy Blood, Thy Body, dying  
Lord !

So Faith can see. To her illumin'd eyes  
The scene around puts on another guise ;  
The Chancel seems a Chamber ; in the  
shade

Of evening see the Paschal board array'd ;  
The mortal Pastor here no longer stands ;  
CHRIST speaks the word and spreads His  
hallowing hands ;

CHRIST breaks the bread, and pours the  
purple wine,

And carries to His guests the meal divine.

Again the vision melts : the Syrian sun  
Sets slowly on the great last Offering done ;  
Yon Cross the broken Body yet sustains ;  
The spear-drawn Blood yon rock of  
Calvary stains ;  
And man is ransom'd by Messiah's pains.  
Faith scans the Deed ; Faith proves the  
Covenant good ;  
And in that Sacrifice finds heavenly food.

Soon, all too soon, from this blest Sacra-  
ment  
Back to the glare of day our feet are bent ;  
Soon wakes the week-day sun, and brings  
along  
The cares and clamours of our human  
throng ;  
The world's loud laughter, threats, or whis-  
per'd spells,  
Life's battles, burthens, weeping, songs  
and knells.  
But we who from that Paschal Chamber  
come  
Still in its shadows find our quiet home,

Safe in its precincts, near our Master's  
heart,  
'Midst all the stress of travel, school, and  
mart.  
And still that Cross goes with us on our way;  
We feast on that great Sacrifice all day.  
The sealing Symbol comes but then and  
there ;  
The Truth is ever ours and everywhere ;  
Faith needs but stretch her hand and lift  
her eyes,  
And ready still for use her Banquet always  
lies.

*March 7, 1894.*

### THE COVENANT

WE covenant with hand and heart  
To follow Christ our Lord ;  
With world, and sin, and self to part ;  
And to obey His word ;  
To love each other heartily,  
In truth and in sincerity,  
And under cross, reproach and shame,  
To glorify His Name.

MORAVIAN

## APPENDIX

THIS be my joy and comfort here,  
This pledge of future glory mine ;  
JESUS, in Spirit now appear,  
And break the Bread and pour the Wine.

From Thy dear hand may I receive  
The Tokens of Thy dying love,  
And, while I feast on earth, believe  
That I shall feast with Thee above.

J. MONTGOMERY.



In 656

## APPENDIX

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### (a) THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN

To every believing Communicant the sixth chapter of St John is a dear and precious Scripture. Our Church expressly refers to it in the Communion Service, in the Long Exhortation. 'If with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive this holy Sacrament, then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Joh. vi. 56. Christ and drink His Blood; then we dwell in Christ and Christ in us.'

The Discourse recorded in that

chapter continually lends itself, as it were, to the Communion Hour and its holy privileges. It is as if in that chapter we were permitted not only

Joh. xii. 25. to 'sit at the Table with Him' like

Luke x. 39. Lazarus, but, like Mary, 'to hear His word' there, as He speaks, over the hallowed Elements, about Himself as our bread, our food; about eating Him, and drinking His Blood; about 'living because of' Him Whom we eat.

It is no wonder that, from the early days of the Christian Church onwards, writers and preachers should have connected the chapter and the holy Supper intimately together.

Let the penitent and thankful believer, as he draws near the Table, often think himself back into that Synagogue at Capernaum, on that far-off day of the Galilean spring, by the beautiful lake-side. As his lips touch

the Bread and Wine, let him as it were hear the Lord, Who discoursed there and then, saying articulately now to him, *'Thou hast eternal life; thou eatest Me, and thou livest because of Me; I will not lose thee; thou shalt never die; I will raise thee up again at the last day.'*

Meantime, let him remember certain cautions about the import of this chapter. To forget these may seriously distort and disturb his use of it, whether for himself or for others. To remember them will not, should not, in the least becloud his peace and joy in the Ordinance of Communion.

First, as a matter of fact, it is not possible to say that the chapter is, for certain and in a direct way, a sermon, as it were, upon the holy Supper. When the Lord uttered it, He was twelve months off His Passion; twelve

months off the institution of His Supper. Yet He speaks in urgent tones to those hearers, there and then, of the necessity of 'eating Him.' He tells them that they 'have' (not 'shall have') 'no life in them' if they do not 'eat His flesh and drink His blood.' Is it likely that He meant to imply that for at least another full year it would be physically impossible for them to 'have life' at all? (An impossibility, by the way, which would be as complete for the Apostles as for the other hearers of their Master, till those sad, lifeless months were over.) Could He have meant to imply such an assertion, He Who only a little while before had said, with solemn and pleading earnestness, and as One who stood ready to bless His hearers upon the spot, '*Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life*'?

Ver. 53.

Joh. v. 40.

Again, the words He uses about those who *do* 'eat' and 'drink,' and those who *do not*, cannot be applied directly to the act of Communion, without very serious exceptions and qualifications.

As to those who *do not* thus 'eat' and 'drink,' He says, as we have just seen, that they 'have no life in them'; that is to say, manifestly, no spiritual life, no eternal life. Now we are unable to apply this, without great reserves, to the reception of the Holy Communion. The little Christian child, who has learnt to sing from the young heart, 'Jesus loves me, this I know,' assuredly 'has life.' The youthful candidate for Confirmation, perhaps just rejoicing in the glad discovery of his Saviour's grace and power as it was never known before, assuredly has life, and waits not for it till he has received his first Communion.

## 118 *The Sixth Chapter of St John*

As to those who *do* 'eat' and 'drink,' the Lord says, and He says it without any reserve or explanation, that they 'dwell in Him and He in them'; that they 'have eternal life'; and He will 'raise them up,' each one of them, 'at the last day.' Are we prepared to apply these words to Communicants just as Communicants? Do they fit the Communicants who, in not very long past days in England, used to receive the holy Supper in order to qualify for election as town-councillors? Or to the Communicants of any period who shew no sign, away from the Table, that they love God and follow Christ? We may, indeed, say that such are 'unworthy.' But that is our own comment; the Lord at Capernaum drew no such distinction. Did He not then look another way? Was He not meaning something else?

Ver. 54, 56.

Yes, surely. To put simply the truth about this Discourse and the holy Supper, we may say that the Ordinance points to the Discourse rather than the Discourse to the Ordinance. The Discourse is occupied with Christ Himself, the Incarnate and also Sacrificed Saviour (see ver. 51, 53, 55), and with man's reception of Him by pure and simple faith ; ' he that cometh Ver. 35. to Me ; he that believeth on Me.' The Ordinance puts this teaching into a tangible form. It is a divine Illustration of its truths ; a divine Seal upon its truths. And it is a most sacred occasion and means of realizing the truths of the chapter and its Discourse, and of receiving its promised blessings. But that is a different thing from saying that the Lord's Supper is the subject of the Discourse.

And this, on the whole, is owned by

early Christian writers on John vi. As I said, they continually connect the Discourse and the Eucharist; but they much rather apply the Discourse to the Eucharist, than explain it as being a Discourse upon the Eucharist.\* The difference is real and important.

One interesting quotation may be given here from a later and not very likely quarter. About the time of the Reformation, a pious German Roman Catholic, Johannes Ferus, wrote a remarkable and deeply spiritual Latin Commentary on St John. In his exposition of chapter vi. the following sentences occur: 'Here the Lord shews us how to use, how to take, this food, Himself. In this passage he deals with the spiritual way, through faith. For as to the bodily receiving, which

\* See this fully shewn in Waterland's *Doctrine of the Eucharist*, ch. vi. vii.



takes place in sacrament (*in sacramento*), He spoke of that at the Last Supper. The spiritual eating he deals with first, as being that without which the bodily profits nothing, nay, does harm. Now, to come to Christ is not to come with the feet, but with faith and trust.\* So came the sinful woman: she came nearer to Christ by faith than by bodily presence; therefore she was satisfied. So came the thief: though he was nailed to the Cross, yet could he come in heart and by faith; so he, in death, did not hunger. So came the centurion, and the woman of Canaan; and each carried a blessing away. For he

\* *Fide et fiducia*. He had previously explained 'faith' as practically identical with 'trust.' 'Faith is not to believe that Christ is, or that He did this or that; evil men and evil spirits can do this; it is with sure, firm, stable trust (*fiducia*) to embrace Christ and all His benefits.'

who believes on Christ (*in Christum*) hungers not in sin; he has Christ's righteousness. He thirsts not in death; he has Christ's life. He hungers not in afflictions; through the Cross he sees deliverance. So Isaiah (xlix. 10): "They shall not hunger nor thirst . . . for He Who hath pity on them shall cover them, and lead them to the fountains of water." In brief, he has all, who has Christ by faith.'

May we have Him always, everywhere, now, here. Then when we come to the blessed Table, 'with a true penitent heart and living faith,' we shall have Him with special peace and gladness there, in receiving, at the Lord's loving command, His physical Counterpart of the eternal, spiritual Reality. And then we shall go away from that Table more than ever able to do it always, everywhere, as we go on through life; for we

## *The Sixth Chapter of St John* 123

shall have had our faith again strengthened by Christ's own royal Seal, impressed on Christ's own eternal Word. We shall have touched the Sign given by His own hand. We shall be sure now that we *lawfully*, for all our needs, carry with us the Thing.

Here let our thought pause, and rest, as we leave awhile this wonderful chapter of St John. Let us turn fully and finally not to the discussion of opinions but to the believing and loving fruition of truths. Behold 'the Secret of the Lord,' Psal. xxv. 14. opened by His Son, that we may receive it into our inmost souls. Behold the Tree of Life in our regained Paradise; 'put forth the hand, and take, and See Gen. iii. 22. live for ever.' To come to Jesus Christ, to believe in Him, to assimilate Him, is for us, as for the first disciples, the elixir of eternal life. It is to hunger

no more, nor thirst any more. It is to live because of the Living One. It is to dwell in Him, and He in us. It is to lie down at last in the profound assurance that He 'will raise us up at the last day.' He *affirms* it all to at His sacred Table, that we may *have* it every hour.

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(b) 'OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE AND  
THANKSGIVING'

THESE words occur, as we well know, in one of the closing prayers of our Communion Office. That prayer is rich with the gold of spiritual truth and divine instruction. Let my reader take new and special note of its humble prayer for 'remission of sins,' for the whole Church of God, 'by the merits

and Death of Christ, and through faith in His Blood.' And of the prayer for '*all other* benefits of His Passion.' And of that act of full surrender, entire consecration; 'Here we offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee.' And then observe how, in closest connexion, follows the beseeching petition that we, believing and self-dedicated Communicants, may be '*full* filled with His grace and heavenly benediction.' Nor let the close of the prayer be forgotten; its profound confession, still continued, of sin, and its adoring request to be nevertheless allowed still to give ourselves to God.

But I speak now only, and very briefly, of that phrase quoted above: '*this our Sacrifice of Praise.*'

It is an important question—does this mean that the Holy Communion is

a Rite of Sacrifice; that the consecrated Elements are a Sacrifice? Such a belief has been largely held in the past, and it is held far and wide at present in many quarters of Christendom, including numerous members of our own Church. With many shades and degrees of meaning it has been and is taught, as a great Christian truth, that the Table is an Altar,\* and the Priest or Presbyter a Sacrificer; and that the hallowed Bread and Wine either become actually (by a purely miraculous change, Transubstantiation,†) Christ Himself, offered anew to God in propitiation for men's sins, or that otherwise the Bread and

\* The term appears in this use in Tertullian (cent. 2-3), but not earlier with any certainty.

† The *substantia*, or basal 'being,' of the bread is held to give place at consecration to that of the Body of Christ, without change of the sensible *phenomena*.

Wine are so united to the living Christ, mysteriously, that to present them before God is, in effect, to present Him.

It is said by some that in 1 Cor xi. 24, where our English Bible gives the words: 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' the Greek should be interpreted—'Offer this to be My memorial-sacrifice;' offer it as an oblation which shall plead Me and My merits before God. And it is said again by many that in Heb. xiii. 10 'an altar' is the Table of the Lord; and an altar implies a sacrifice.

But some grave objections beset these views. In Heb. xiii. 10, if we read *the context* carefully, I think we shall see that the Writer is speaking (as a Hebrew to Hebrews) of *the Hebrew* 'altar' and of the great Mosaic Atonement Day (Levit. xvi.) when the sacrificed victim was *burnt* whole, '*without the camp,*' and the priest (who '*served*

*the tabernacle*’) touched no part of it for food.\*

As regards the Lord’s words, ‘Do this in remembrance of Me’ it is remarkable that the early Christian writers, with one very doubtful exception,† do not see in the Greek words so rendered the meaning which I quoted above; nor does that meaning appear in the language of the really ancient Communion Offices. No certain assertion can rightly be made (though it is sometimes made) that the words rendered ‘*do*’ and ‘*remembrance*’ bear the least sacrificial meaning in 1 Cor. xi. 24; certainly they do not do so anywhere else in the New Testament.‡

\* See further below, p. 134.

† St Justin Martyr.

‡ See this and other points illustrated in a learned treatise, *Recent Teachings on the Eucharistic Sacrifice*, by ‘an English Presbyter.’



And most certainly the Church of England does not so understand them. For in our Communion Office the thought of 'remembrance' is connected not with God's memory but with ours; 'to the end that *we* should always remember.' And thus, surely, we must understand the words of the Catechism; 'for a perpetual *remembrance* of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the benefits which *we* *receive* thereby.'

Probably not for some generations after the Apostles' day was the idea of 'offering,' or 'sacrifice,' in any sense before us here, distinctively connected with the Supper and the Table of the

(Stock: 1892.) Also a recent able discussion by Professor T. K. Abbott, of Dublin, '*Do this in remembrance of Me.*' See too an anonymous *Exposition of the Lord's Supper* (Deighton: Cambridge, 1884).

Lord. The Communion was at first, definitely and altogether, a holy Feast ; full of divine significance and blessing ; a Feast upon a Sacrifice, but therefore a thing quite different from the sacrificing act itself.

Never in the New Testament is the Christian minister called a sacrificer (*ιερεύς*). Never, unless in Heb. xiii. 10, of which we have just spoken, is the Table called an altar. And never, as we know, is it so called in our Prayer Book. In the first reformed English Liturgy, 1549, the word was retained ; in the second, 1552, the word was removed ; and in every subsequent revision of the Book the removal has been maintained.

And as regards this particular expression, 'our sacrifice of praise,' there is good evidence in Church literature to prove that it means not the

Eucharist as a sacrifice, but our sacrifice of grateful *praise for* the Eucharist, and for the blessings which it seals. The phrase is derived directly from Heb. xiii. 15—‘Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, *that is, the fruit of our lips*, giving thanks to His name.’

It is easy to explain in the abstract, and to defend in the abstract, the use of the word ‘sacrifice’ for the blessed Sacrament of the Supper. We may plead that it has an intense *connexion with* the One Sacrifice, being its Sacrament, its divine Sign and Seal ; and that therefore it may be called, *as it were*, a Sacrifice, and the Table, *as it were*, an Altar. But does not experience warn us that in fact, whatever be the theory, we had better not do so ? To do so is to make what in Scripture is, at most, a subordinate view of the Ordinance a

prominent one. And history tells us that it is a view which tends, when prominent, to become dominant. And then comes in the grievous danger, nay, the sad certainty, that the worshipper will be tempted to think more of the Chancel than of Calvary, and more of the Table than of the Lord's Cross ; and to look more directly to the ministering priest as his mediator than to 'the great High Priest passed into the heavens.' A human system, unauthorized by God's Word, will glide across the field, and occupy it, just where we ought 'to lift up our eyes, and see Jesus only with ourselves.'

Heb. iv. 4 ;  
and see the  
whole argu-  
ment of the  
Epistle.

Mar. ix. 8.

It is not willingly that I have thus discussed, in this little book, a point of anxious controversy. Truly I may say, as before God, that it has not been done for controversy's sake. But, 'there is a cause.' We do need to

exercise reverent caution, and to think soberly, when of the Holy Communion we are invited to make a Sacrificial Rite, in which a propitiatory ceremony is conducted for us, while all the time our Master says, 'Eat ye, drink ye; do this in remembrance of Me.'

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(c) REMARKS ON SOME OTHER WORDS  
AND PHRASES IN THE ENGLISH  
COMMUNION OFFICE, OR CON-  
NECTED WITH IT.

I. '*The Table.*' It is observable that (as we have said above, p. 130) the Prayer Book never uses the word 'altar' for the holy Table, and that the history of the Book shews that this is a *deliberate* avoidance of the word. This

is true to the indications of the New Testament, which puts the holy Supper before us as not a Sacrifice but a Feast consequent on a Covenant Sacrifice, offered and accepted; an idea altogether different. It is in harmony also with the fact that the New Testament never calls the Christian Pastor *ιερεύς* (*hiëreus, sacerdos*), a word associated with sacrificing functions.

Heb. xiii. 10 is a passage sometimes quoted to shew that the Table is the Christian Altar. But its context clearly indicates that the inspired Writer's thought lay in another direction. He was speaking as a Hebrew to Hebrews, of the ritual of the Atonement Day, as typical of the Death of Christ and of our relation to Him through it. 'We' Hebrews 'have an altar,' the altar as used on the great Day of Atonement

in the Tabernacle or Temple. Not one particle of the sacrifice then and there offered might be eaten, even by the Priests; all was 'burned, without the camp.' And then he goes on to reason on the spiritual significance of this fact of *the Mosaic* ritual.

As a fact of history, the framers of our Prayer Book were careful to remove not only *the word* 'altar,' but *the thing*, and to introduce not only the word 'Table,' but the thing. The solid stone structure was displaced, and the movable Table of wood set up instead. And this, because 'the use of an altar is to make sacrifice upon it; the use of a table is to serve for men to eat upon.' See Ridley's *Works* (Parker Society), p. 322.

2. 'The most *comfortable Sacrament* of the Body and Blood of Christ.'

'*Comfortable*,' in older English, means '*strengthening*;' the syllable '*fort*' is the element which appears in '*fortitude*,' '*fortify*.'—'The Sacrament of the Body,' etc., does not mean 'the Sacrament which *consists of* the Body,' etc., but the hallowed 'outward and visible *Sign*' of the divine Reality related to it. That Reality (*Res*, '*Thing*,' in technical Church language) is, in the Supper, the literal holy Body as pierced on the Cross and holy Blood as shed on the Cross. Of that Body slain and Blood shed, in other words, of that Sacrifice once offered, the Bread and the Wine are the *Sacramentum*; not 'the Thing,' but 'the Sacrament of the Thing;' the valid Representatives, to faith, of 'the Thing;' the 'sure testimonies and effectual signs' of it (Art. XXV.), witnessing from God to its verity, and



effectually making over to faith, deed-like, the possession and application of all its benefits.

3. 'Our food and sustenance *in* that holy Sacrament.' The word '*in*' is not a mere synonym for '*at*.' Undoubtedly it includes '*at*,' but it goes beyond it, and is in a sense independent of it. It may be almost paraphrased by '*under*.' As I have elsewhere (p. 106) sought to explain, there is an important sense in which *every* spiritual blessing in Christ is enjoyed '*under*' the Seal of the Sacrament of the Table, which is the Sacrament of the Cross; and, in this sense, '*in* the Sacrament.' The moment of Communion is *a* most sacred and special occasion of such enjoyment; but indeed it is not *the only* one. 'We feed on Christ,' says St Jerome, 'not only when we receive the Sacrament but when we read the

Scriptures.' We feed on Him in every act of faith. But like the phrase 'in circumcision,' so the phrase 'in the Sacrament' covers far more than the time of the actual Rite. And this consideration both gives more honour to the divine Rite and secures that the general exercises of the life of faith shall be at once closely connected with the Rite, and yet, so to speak, unfettered by the mere time or place of sacramental performance.

4. 'The benefit of *absolution*.' See the remarks above, p. 41. 'If we receive the same *unworthily*.' Obviously, by context, this means without the spiritual requisites; repentance, faith, love.

5. 'We eat and drink our own *damnation*, not considering the Lord's Body.' 'Damnation' in the Authorized Version of 1 Cor. xi. 29 represents

the Greek κρίσις, *crisis*, 'judgment.' The context shews that it denotes not perdition, but punitive discipline on those who irreverently failed to see in the symbolic Bread the Lord's own Sign and Seal of His death-wrought Atonement.

6. 'Holy *mysteries*.' The Greek word, μυστήριον, *mystery*, means a secret thing, particularly a secret and significant rite of religion. It is frequently rendered in Church Latin by *sacramentum*, and the two words became, in fact, synonyms of each other. The holy Supper is 'a mystery,' not in the sense of its being unintelligible in purpose or nature, but in that of its being reserved for, so to speak, full Christians, as distinguished from mere inquirers, or from those so young as to be incapable of apprehension of its significance.

7. 'The burthen of our sins is *intolerable*,' it is *unbearable*; we cannot support it without a hopeless condemnation. We lay it, therefore, on the head of Him who 'taketh away the sins of the world.'

8. 'That our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood.' A rhythmic sentence, not meant necessarily to imply (what Scripture gives no hint of), that the Bread of the holy Supper acts specially on our body, and the wine on our soul, but to emphasize with an almost poetic eloquence the thoroughness of the work of the great Sacrifice for our whole being. The language of 1 John i. 7, carefully examined and illustrated, shews that in Scripture the phrase 'cleansing' or washing '*by blood*' refers to atonement,

propitiation, pardon. Here, accordingly, to be true to Scripture, we should explain, 'that our whole being, body and soul, may be accepted before the Holy One by the merit and virtue of the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, of which the Bread and the Wine are the Sacrament.'

9. What does the word '*is*' mean in the words of Institution (and Consecration)? In human language, which our Lord, the Man of men, used most genuinely, the word '*is*' in such a connexion as that given in this case *never implies identity*. Whenever, in human language, '*is*' connects two words or thoughts obviously dissimilar, it is *always* understood with qualification; as when we say, 'This picture *is* the King,' or 'This note *is* a thousand pounds.' An illustration of this occurs in the Institution itself; 'This Cup *is*

*the Covenant;*' where no one thinks of a mysterious change, but of an intense mental and legal connexion. The Roman theory of Transubstantiation, refined and subtle as it is, attempts to make '*is*' quite literal, but it really does nothing of the kind. It most elaborately *explains* it, by an arbitrary philosophical theory. And still less does such a theory as that the consecrated bread 'has under its form the presence of the glorified Body,' make '*is*' literal. By the laws of human speech, the word here must be explained by context. And does not the context, 'this Cup is the Covenant,' illustrate and explain it?

10. The *closing Rubric* of the Office requires earnest attention. It is sometimes printed within inverted commas, as if it stood on a different footing from other Rubrics. But at the last revi-

sion, 1662, it was inserted by the Revisers (as is shewn by the revised copy preserved in the Library of the House of Lords, and published (1870) in facsimile), as just a rubric among rubrics, with the same initial mark (¶).—Observe in it the phrase ‘*corporal* presence,’ bodily presence, presence of the Body (whether glorified or unglorified) *as a body*; the thought of such a presence is negated by the Rubric. In the Prayer Book of 1552, the same passage, substantially, appears; but the words there are ‘*real and essential* presence,’ that is, ‘presence of the Thing (*Res, realis*) of the Sacrament, in its Being;’ that is, a presence (in this case) of the actual Body and Blood of Calvary. Carefully weighed, these words mean the same as ‘*corporal* presence,’ explained just above. What in either case is negated, is that the

Body (crucified) and Blood (shed) are *themselves* there, as distinguished from the virtue of their Work received by faith.

The phrase '*Real Presence*' (*Realis Præsentia*), sometimes loosely used, is properly technical. It means not the '*genuine*' presence of the Lord Jesus Christ with His people in His Ordinance, which assuredly we have, to our joy and blessing; but the actual *presence of the Thing* (*Res*) of the Sacrament; the actual, unfigurative, Body and Blood. The phrase, so far from being primitive, was a modernism (in connexion with the Holy Communion) in the sixteenth century.

II. 'The *natural* Flesh and Blood of Christ.' That is, the literal, unfigurative, Flesh and Blood. So, just below, 'the *natural* Body' is the literal, unfigurative Body, as dis-



tinguished from the 'mystical,' non-literal, Body, the Church. 'Natural' does not mean unglorified; for the natural Body is said to be now 'in Heaven, and not here.'

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As a last remark, closing this book, I cannot but express the humble but deep conviction that the truths connected with the words Covenant and Seal are the clue to the true purport of both the divine Sacraments, and that the patient and prayerful application of those truths in the study of the Ordinances will secure, as nothing else will, at once simplicity, depth and reverence, in our apprehension and use of those two great Gifts of Christ.

OH may Thy Table honour'd be,  
And furnished well with joyful guests,  
And may each soul Salvation see,  
That here its sacred Pledges tastes.

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